

RESEARCHER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Seney National Wildlife Refuge (2015)

The vision statement of Seney National Wildlife Refuge (2009 *Comprehensive Conservation Plan*, CCP) states (in part): “...As part of a holistic approach to natural resource stewardship, people will be welcomed to use the Refuge to learn about the natural world. The public will be invited to participate in wildlife-dependent experiences that are in concert with the relatively undeveloped nature of the Refuge. Students and researchers will be encouraged to use the Refuge as an outdoor laboratory for biological and ecological research that focuses on understanding natural patterns and processes and developing habitat management techniques.”

Research is defined as projects aiming to answer novel questions, with the expected production of peer-reviewed publications, including theses, dissertations, and refereed papers. [Projects that do not have these aims may be considered inventory and monitoring projects and may yet garner Refuge support.]. However, because of limited staff, existing policies and limitations due to locked gates, no camping, no overnight use, no boating, etc., and the desire to maintain safe working conditions for staff and the public, the review of most research requests at Seney is similar to research requests for Federal Wilderness Areas. That is, all research is not necessarily compatible with the Refuge mission; instead, an emphasis is placed upon approving and facilitating research that directly relates to the management of habitats and ecosystems. Moreover, research that illustrates true “business” partnerships are what the Refuge wishes to foster (see Corace and Vaniman 2012 *The Wildlife Professional*, link off of Science page). For those parties willing to discuss research partnerships with the Applied Sciences Program, communication early and often is key.

For permit consideration, the Principle Investigator (PI) should talk with the Refuge Contact for the Refuge program related to their proposed research: Applied Sciences for all projects involving wildlife, wildlife habitat, or general ecosystem studies; Fire Management or Visitor Services. If the PI is uncertain which staff to contact, please contact Dr. Corace (see below). If activity does not fall into these broad areas, then other Refuge staff may be contacted and applications will then be forwarded through them to Dr. Corace. The PI will usually be asked to complete a Research and Monitoring Special Use Permit application (see top of Science website page). This form should then be sent to the Refuge Contact **a minimum of three months (90 days) prior to the expected initiation of the work**. The PI may be contacted and asked to provide a more detailed project proposal. If a Refuge gate key is issued, **a check for \$100 and made out to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** is required as deposit. The Refuge also requires a yearly written update of work (**due 31 December of each year**) and, upon completion of projects, a final, detailed report. Additionally, a copy of any resulting refereed publication, dissertation, or thesis must be provided. Depending on the situation, the Refuge may also request copies of all data in an acceptable database format. Finally, the Refuge retains the right to request that a staff member be made part of any graduate committee (assuming that the necessary academic requirements for such a position are held by the Refuge staff person). As such, negotiations should ensue regarding expectations, division of labor, etc. Common expectations include: 1) presentation(s) to the Visitor Center and 2) review of ALL written material before submission (3 days for abstracts, 1 week for papers).